

February 2023



# DOING BETTER FOR BLACK EDUCATORS:

Six Policy Recommendations for  
Improving the Recruitment and  
Preparation of Black Educators

Cortney Rowland, Ph.D.

Keilani Martin Goggins

Allyson Williams Eubanks

Aja Simpson Zulfiqar



## Acknowledgements

NCTR would like to thank the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, and the W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation for their support of this publication. NCTR would also like to thank Ballmer Group for their ongoing support of NCTR's Black Educators Initiative (BEI).

We are grateful to the seven BEI grantee programs we interviewed whose insights helped shape this report's recommendations:

- [Kansas City Teacher Residency \(KCTR\) Program](#)
- [Nashville Teacher Residency \(NTR\) Program](#)
- [Clarkson University's Master of Arts in Teaching Residency Program](#)
- CREATE Teacher Residency Program
- [Teacher in Residence Program at Old Dominion University \(ODU\)](#)
- [The Minority Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Equity Center \(MERREC\) at Virginia Commonwealth University \(VCU\) \[a partner in the Richmond Teacher Residency \(RTR\)\]](#)
- [University of St. Thomas' Minneapolis St. Thomas Residency and Saint Paul Public Schools Urban Teacher Residency \(SUTR\) programs.](#)

Finally, the authors would like to thank NCTR colleagues Dr. Kathlene H. Campbell, Dr. Tabitha Grossman, Erica Hines, and Alicia Roberson, as well as collaborator Julie Petersen for their reviews of this paper.



## About NCTR



The National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing, launching, supporting, and accelerating the impact of teacher residency programs. Headquartered in Chicago, NCTR's mission is to disrupt historical educational inequities by advancing the teacher residency

movement to prepare effective, diverse, culturally responsive educators. For more information about NCTR, please visit [nctresidencies.org](https://nctresidencies.org).

## About the Authors

**Allyson Williams Eubanks** is a Director of Programs at NCTR, supporting teacher residencies in NCTR's Residency Design Academy (RDA). She joined the staff in 2021 as Associate Director and advanced to her current position in 2022. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and criminal justice from the University of Maryland, College Park and her Master of Science in secondary education from Johns Hopkins University.

**Keilani Martin Goggins** is the Director of the Black Educators Initiative (BEI). She joined NCTR in 2019. In her role, she provides support and technical assistance to BEI grantees and identifies and cultivates partnerships to scale the promising practices of BEI. Keilani received her undergraduate degree from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and obtained her master's in public administration at Tennessee State University. She is currently pursuing her doctorate of education at Trevecca Nazarene University.

**Cortney Rowland, Ph.D.**, joined NCTR in 2021 as the Director of State and Federal Policy. In this role, she leads the development and implementation of the overall policy priorities and strategy for the organization. She holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from Ohio University, a master's degree in sociology from Bowling Green State University, and a Ph.D. in sociology from Loyola University Chicago.

**Aja Simpson Zulficar** is a Director of Programs at NCTR, supporting teacher residencies in NCTR's Network through coaching and group facilitation. She joined the staff in 2021 as associate director and advanced into her current role in 2022. She received her

undergraduate degree in psychology and Spanish from Emory University, a Master of Science in psychology from Capella University, and a Master of Art in Sociology – Race and Urban Relations and graduate certificate in women’s studies from Georgia State University.

The appropriate citation for this report is:

Rowland, C., Martin Goggins, K., Williams Eubanks, A. & Simpson Zulfiqar, A. (2023, February). *Doing Better for Black Educators: Six Policy Recommendations for Improving the Recruitment and Preparation of Black Educators*. National Center for Teacher Residencies.

**Photo on the Cover:**

Ashley Tate is a teacher resident at Nashville Teacher Residency. This picture was taken at LEAD Cameron.



# Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>About NCTR</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>About the Authors</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The Challenge: Increasing the Number of Black Educators to Mirror Student Diversity</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>A Solution: Applying Lessons Learned from the Black Educators Initiative (BEI) to Improve Recruitment and Preparation of Black Educators</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>What is a Teacher Residency?</i>	7
<b>Recommendations for Improving the Recruitment and Preparation of Black Educators</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>NCTR's Levers for Equitable Teacher Residencies</i>	12
<i>Recommendation 1. Make teacher preparation financially accessible.</i>	13
Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples	14
Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 1	17
<i>Recommendation 2. Prioritize recruitment strategies that focus on Black educators.</i>	18
Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples	19
Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 2	21
<i>Recommendation 3. Ensure that teacher preparation programs are culturally and linguistically sustaining for Black educators.</i>	22
Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples	23
Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 3	25
<i>Recommendation 4. Employ affinity groups as a standard component of the teacher education experience.</i>	26
Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples	27
Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 4	28
<i>Recommendation 5. Invest in and support mentors who can cultivate prospective Black educators.</i>	29
Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples	30
Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 5	31
<i>Recommendation 6. Include voices of Black educators in the development of teacher education policy.</i>	33
Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples	34
Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 6	35
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>35</b>

## Doing Better for Black Educators

*Six Policy Recommendations for Improving the Recruitment and Preparation of Black Educators*

### The Challenge: Increasing the Number of Black Educators to Mirror Student Diversity

The research is clear: While teachers of color confer benefits to all students, they are particularly advantageous for students of color. Black educators have been shown to contribute significantly to student achievement among Black students in both reading and math; in particular, lower-performing students benefit substantially from a teacher of the same race.<sup>1</sup> What's more, Black students who have a single Black teacher in grades three through five are more likely to graduate from high school and consider college, particularly Black males.<sup>2</sup> Researchers have posited that this may be because teachers of color tend to have higher academic expectations for students of color and because students of color can benefit from having teachers from their own racial and ethnic group who can serve as successful role models and who may have greater knowledge of their heritage.<sup>3</sup>

**However, there simply aren't enough Black educators.**

Based on data from the 2017-2018 school year (the most recent data published by the National Center for Education Statistics), just 7% of teachers identified as Black while nearly 15% of the nearly 50 million students enrolled in public elementary and secondary

---

<sup>1</sup> Dee, T. (2004). Teachers, race, and student achievement in a randomized experiment. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 86(1), 195-210. Retrieved at: <https://direct.mit.edu/rest/article/86/1/195/57486/Teachers-Race-andStudent-Achievement-in-a>; Egalite A., Kisida, B., & Winters, M. (2015). Representation in the classroom: The effect of own-race teachers on student achievement. *Economics of Education Review*, 45, 44-52. Retrieved at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0272775715000084>

<sup>2</sup> Gershenson, S., Hart, C., Hyman, J., Lindsay, C., & Papageorge, N. (2018). *The long-run impacts of same-race teachers*. National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 25254. Retrieved at: <https://www.nber.org/papers/w25254>

<sup>3</sup> Albert Shanker Institute. (2015). *The State of Teacher Diversity in American Education*. Retrieved at: <http://www.shankerinstitute.org/resource/teacherdiversity>

schools in fall 2020 identified as Black.<sup>4</sup> Racial gaps between student and teacher diversity exist in every state, making this a nationwide challenge.<sup>5</sup>

The lack of diversity in the teaching profession is not accidental. The *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling on the unconstitutionality of racial segregation of children in public schools had the unintended consequence of also causing “the dismissal, demotion, or forced resignation of many experienced, highly credentialed black educators who staffed black-only schools.”<sup>6</sup> Decades of additional policies and other factors have compounded that experience, and the consequences of these policies and factors are still being felt today.

### **A Solution: Applying Lessons Learned from the Black Educators Initiative (BEI) to Improve Recruitment and Preparation of Black Educators**

One approach that appears to be addressing this problem is teacher residencies, which are community-based clinical preparation programs developed in partnership with school districts and anchored in their context (see “*What is a Teacher Residency?*” sidebar). These teacher residencies are raising the bar for quality while reducing barriers to entry for teachers of color and other underrepresented groups: Growing evidence shows that teacher residency programs are effective in increasing Black teacher recruitment and retention.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, 62% of teacher residents in NCTR partner programs identify as persons of color, compared with 20% of all new teachers nationally.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools. *Condition of Education*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved February 3, 2023 at: <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cge>

<sup>5</sup> Boser, U. (2014). Teacher Diversity Revisited: A New State-by-State Analysis. *Center for American Progress*. Retrieved at: <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/teacher-diversity-revisited/>

<sup>6</sup> Will, M. (2019). 65 years after “Brown v. Board,” where are all the Black educators. *Education Week*, 38(34), 17. Retrieved at:

<https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/65-years-after-brown-v-board-where-are-all-the-black-educators/2019/05>; see also Carter Andrews et al. (2019). Changing the Narrative on Diversifying the Teaching Workforce: A Look at Historical and Contemporary Factors That Inform Recruitment and Retention of Teachers of Color. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 70(1) 6 –12. Retrieved at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0022487118812418>

<sup>7</sup> Guha, R., Hylar, M. E., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). The teacher residency: An innovative model for preparing teachers. *Learning Policy Institute*. Retrieved at: <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/teacher-residency>

<sup>8</sup> National Center for Teacher Residencies. (2020). *2019-2020 Annual Impact Report*. Retrieved at: <https://nctresidencies.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/NCTR-Annual-Report-December-2020-FINAL.pdf>

### **What is a Teacher Residency?**

NCTR’s teacher residency model starts with a strong partnership between a school district and an educator preparation program. The model blends a rigorous full-year classroom apprenticeship for pre-service teachers with academic coursework that is closely aligned with the classroom experience. Teacher residents learn how to teach by working for an entire year alongside a highly trained mentor teacher in the partner school district. Teacher residents also receive financial support in the training year, often in the form of a stipend.

Upon completion of their teacher residency program, graduates go on to become a teacher of record. The support for teacher residents continues throughout their first year of teaching, as teacher residents receive ongoing induction support from content and instructional coaches. Teacher residency programs typically require that candidates commit to teach in the school district for a minimum of three years.

In 2022, NCTR collaborated with the Pathways Alliance – a coalition of organizations focused on supporting and implementing diverse and inclusive educator preparation pathways – to develop a shared, research-based definition of teacher residencies.<sup>9</sup> The definition was developed to clarify the field’s use of the term. NCTR’s definition includes all four key components that define teacher residencies-partnerships, pre-service curriculum, resident experiences, and mentor teachers as key supports.

To accelerate the number of Black teacher residents and meet their unique needs, in 2019 NCTR launched the [Black Educators Initiative \(BEI\)](#) to support a network of teacher residencies that will together recruit, prepare, and retain 750 Black educators. Teacher residencies receiving support through BEI are focused on redesigning their programs to serve the needs of Black teacher residents through:

- **Direct financial support** for scholarships and living stipends, supplementing expenses such as the costs of state licensure tests and textbooks, and offering other financial assistance.
- **Improving core components of the teacher residency program to be more culturally and linguistically sustaining for Black educators**, including recruitment

---

<sup>9</sup> Pathways Alliance, Prepared To Teach, & National Center for Teacher Residencies. (2022). *Towards a National Definition of Teacher Residencies*. Retrieved at: <https://nctresidencies.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Pathways-Alliance-Towards-a-National-Definition-of-Teacher-Residencies.pdf>

and selection processes; mentor selection, professional learning, and growth; the residency year experience; retention efforts; and supporting residents' social-emotional learning (SEL).



*Ashley Tate is a teacher resident at Nashville Teacher Residency. This picture was taken at LEAD Cameron.*

Since its inception, BEI has provided 27 teacher residency programs with nearly \$14 million, and has supported a total of 718 Black teacher residents.<sup>10</sup> A recent external evaluation conducted by the Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL) at Columbia University, *Recruitment and Retention of Black Educators: Promising Strategies at Eight U.S.*

*Teacher Residencies*, confirmed that the teacher residencies receiving BEI grant support are effectively meeting their goal of recruiting, preparing, and placing more Black educators in the classrooms that need them. CPRL studied grantees that have participated since the first year of the initiative and found that:

- 1.** Being an original BEI grantee (i.e., received grant funds in the first year of the initiative and is still a grantee) is associated with a **16% higher share of Black residents**, compared with non-BEI programs, to a statistically significant degree.
- 2.** BEI has **increased the number of Black graduates per residency** to an average of about 21 Black teachers per program.
- 3.** BEI has a **large and significant impact on the hiring of Black teachers**. On average, after BEI was implemented, about 14 additional BEI graduates were hired in Title I schools and about 24 additional graduates were hired in partner school districts.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> A list of all 27 BEI grantees to date can be found here: <https://nctresidencies.org/resource/nctr-awards-3-7-million-in-grants-to-27-residencies-to-support-recruitment-preparation-and-retention-of-black-educators/>

<sup>11</sup> Madhani, N., Shand, R., & Austin, K. (2022). *Recruitment and Retention of Black Educators*

While these residencies alone cannot find and prepare enough Black educators to meet the needs of all students and schools, there is much to be learned from the way they have been designed to respond to the unique needs, interests, and motivations of Black educators.

**The goal of this paper is to help teacher preparation programs, school districts, and states use what BEI grantees are learning to improve the recruitment, preparation, and support of Black educators across the country.**

Although the lessons learned emerge from the work of teacher residency programs, the recommendations and action steps are relevant for a broader set of stakeholders in the education system. In fact, teacher preparation programs, school districts, and states all play a key role and must share responsibility for the recruitment and development of our nation's teachers.

## **Recommendations for Improving the Recruitment and Preparation of Black Educators**

Each recommendation in this section introduces action steps that teacher preparation programs, school districts, and states can take to improve the recruitment, preparation, and support of Black educators. These recommendations are anchored in relevant research, as well as in how BEI teacher residencies are addressing this area. To develop the recommendations, NCTR reviewed a wide range of research and other publications on diversifying the educator workforce, as well as the work of BEI grantees, including:

- The [Year 1 \(2019-2020\)](#) and [Year 2 \(2020-2021\)](#) BEI Annual Reports which describe BEI programming and support, promising practices and strategies, and impact.

---

Promising strategies at eight U.S. teacher residencies. *Center for Public Research and Leadership*. Retrieved at: <https://nctresidencies.org/resource/recruitment-and-retention-of-black-educators-promising-strategies-at-eight-u-s-teacher-residencies/>



- The 2020-2021 BEI Working Group Synthesis of Learning, which outlines learnings and resources across five BEI small communities of practice that a subset of BEI programs participated in over the course of a year. These working groups focused on the following topics: induction/SEL support strategies, curriculum development, mentor professional learning, emergency funds, and racial affinity groups.<sup>12</sup>
- The CPRL evaluation noted earlier, *Recruitment and Retention of Black Educators: Promising Strategies at Eight U.S. Teacher Residencies*, particularly the Discussion and Considerations for the Future sections.<sup>13</sup>
- Interviews with program administrators from seven of the 27 BEI grantee programs about the most effective components of their residency program:
  - [Kansas City Teacher Residency \(KCTR\) Program](#)
  - [Nashville Teacher Residency \(NTR\) Program](#)
  - [Clarkson’s Master of Arts in Teaching Residency Program](#)
  - CREATE Teacher Residency Program
  - [Teacher in Residence Program at Old Dominion University \(ODU\)](#)
  - [The Minority Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Equity Center \(MERREC\) at Virginia Commonwealth University \(VCU\) \[a partner in the Richmond Teacher Residency \(RTR\)\]](#)
  - [University of St. Thomas’ Minneapolis St. Thomas Residency and Saint Paul Public Schools Urban Teacher Residency \(SUTR\) programs.](#)

This section includes six recommendations and supporting action steps for improving the recruitment, preparation, and support of Black educators:

1. Make teacher preparation **financially accessible**.
2. Prioritize **recruitment strategies** that focus on Black educators.
3. Ensure that teacher preparation programs are **culturally and linguistically sustaining** for Black educators.
4. Employ **affinity groups** as a standard component of the teacher education experience.
5. **Invest in and support mentors** who can cultivate prospective Black educators.
6. Include **voices of Black educators** in the development of teacher education policy.

---

<sup>12</sup> The Synthesis of Learning is not publicly available.

<sup>13</sup> Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022

These recommendations and action steps are directed toward teacher preparation programs, school districts, and states, and can be put into action through procedural, regulatory, or legislative actions. Each recommendation is aligned to one (or more) of NCTR's Levers for Equitable Teacher Residencies. *[Figure 1]* The levers build upon NCTR's former standards for teacher residencies and reflect knowledge gained through working with dozens of high-performing residency programs in response to research on recruiting, preparing, and retaining highly effective day-one ready teachers, particularly teachers of color.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> National Center for Teacher Residencies. (2022). *Levers for Equitable Teacher Residencies*. Retrieved at: <https://nctresidencies.org/about-nctr/our-residency-model/levers-for-equitable-teacher-residencies/>

Figure 1: NCTR's Levers for Equitable Teacher Residencies





## **Recommendation 1. Make teacher preparation financially accessible.**

This report is not the first to address the reality that high-quality teacher preparation pathways need to be financially accessible to prospective teacher candidates—the cost of pursuing these pathways should not be a barrier to entering or persisting in a teacher training program. Cost is currently a barrier to teacher preparation because of the tuition, exams, and licensure fees. Additionally, teacher candidates are typically required to complete a clinical experience for which they are not compensated. For example, teacher residencies and other high-quality pathways include extensive classroom practice time (see “*What is a Teacher Residency?*” sidebar above); however, few individuals can afford to work for free or low pay for that long.<sup>15</sup> For those who do choose to pursue these pathways, many accrue significant debt: over half of pre-K–12 teachers have unpaid loans, with 28% of those educators carrying a loan balance of \$65,000 or more.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, the high cost of teacher preparation poses a disproportionately higher burden on Black teachers: Black teacher candidates are more likely to not only borrow, but also borrow more than their white peers.<sup>17</sup> They are also more likely to struggle with repayment than their peers because they tend to earn lower salaries once they become teachers, and because they collectively have fewer resources due to a lack of generational wealth and overall higher debt burdens.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Prepared To Teach, Bank Street College (2022). *Registered Apprenticeship Programs and Teacher Residencies: Building Shared Understandings Between Workforce Development and Education*. Retrieved at: <https://educate.bankstreet.edu/pt/37>

<sup>16</sup> Hershcopf, M., Puckett Blais, M., Taylor, E. D., & Pelika, S. (2021). Student Loan Debt among Educators: A National Crisis. *National Education Association*. Retrieved at: <https://www.nea.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/Student%20Loan%20Debt%20among%20Educators.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Flannery, M.E. (2021, April 20). Retired Teachers Still Struggling with Student Debt. *National Education Association*. Retrieved at: <https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/retired-teachers-still-struggling-student-debt>; Miller, B. (2017, October 16). New federal data show a student loan crisis for African American borrowers. *Center for American Progress*. Retrieved at: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-postsecondary/news/2017/10/16/440711/new-federal-data-show-student-loan-crisis-african-american-borrowers/>

<sup>18</sup> Allegretto, S. (2022). The Teacher Pay Penalty Has Hit a New High: Trends in Teacher Wages and Compensation through 2021. *Economic Policy Institute*. Retrieved at: <https://www.epi.org/publication/teacher-pay-penalty-2022/>; Fiddiman, B., Campbell, C., & Partelow, L. (2019). Student debt: An overlooked barrier to increasing teacher diversity. *Center for American Progress*. Retrieved at: <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/student-debt-overlooked-barrier-increasing-teacher-diversity/>; Jackson, V., & Mustafa, J. B. (2022). Student Debt Is Harming the Mental Health of Black Borrowers. *Education Trust*. Retrieved at: <https://edtrust.org/resource/how-student-debt-harms-black-borrowers-mental-health/>

To bring more educators of color into the teaching profession, we must make their preparation financially accessible and ensure that cost is not a burden that keeps Black educators from pursuing teaching as a career. In a recent study by RAND, teachers of color overwhelmingly chose financial incentives and relief as a strategy to boost enrollment in teacher preparation. In fact, 67% of Black teachers identified expanding student loan forgiveness or service scholarships as key strategies for recruiting more teachers of color. Further, 31% of Black teachers chose teacher residencies as their preferred preparation pathway because high-quality, financially accessible teacher residencies tend to include low tuition, a stipend to support the resident's time during the clinical experience, and other funding support and benefits such as scholarships or licensure test fees.<sup>19</sup>

### ***Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples***

BEI is proving that investments in making teacher preparation financially accessible for Black educators does yield benefits. Teacher residents from BEI-supported teacher residency programs cite financial benefits as critical to attracting them into the teacher residency program and said that more Black teacher candidates would apply if they knew the financial benefits.<sup>20</sup> The CPRL study found that for every \$10,000 increase in stipends to support time during the year of clinical experience, teacher residencies in BEI achieve a four percentage point increase in the proportion of Black teacher candidates.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to adequate stipends, financial supports such as emergency or support funds were found to be the difference between Black teacher residents staying in the program and quitting; these funds, which can range from \$250 to several thousand dollars, help residents pay for rent, child care, or car repairs.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Steiner, E. D., Greer, L., Berdie, L., Schwartz, H. L., Woo, A., Doan, S., Lawrence, R.A., Wolfe, R.L., & Gittens, A. D. (2022). Prioritizing Strategies to Racially Diversify the K–12 Teacher Workforce. *RAND Corporation*. Retrieved at: [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA1108-6.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1108-6.html)

<sup>20</sup> Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022

<sup>21</sup> Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022

<sup>22</sup> Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022

BEI grantee University of St. Thomas in Minnesota operates three teacher residency programs, including the Minneapolis St. Thomas Residency for special education and elementary teachers (in partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools), the Saint Paul Public Schools Urban Residency (SUTR) (in partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools), and the Charter School Residency Program (in partnership with a consortium of charter school partners). These programs leverage a variety



*Martin Odima Jr. is a teacher mentor at Saint Paul Urban Teacher Residency.*

of sources to offer residents a higher-than-average stipend during the year of clinical experience. For example, residents in the SUTR program receive a \$30,000 stipend (including benefits) from the partnering school district that is paid over the course of the full calendar year. To support paying stipends to their teacher residents, the school district budgets \$1 million as a match to the University’s approximately \$3 million Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) federal grant. Meanwhile, stipends for the candidates in the Minneapolis program are funded through the state’s Q Comp program, a voluntary program for school districts that receive per-pupil funding from the state in exchange for designing and implementing programming related to teacher leadership, professional learning, teacher evaluation, and performance pay and alternative pay schedules.<sup>23</sup>

In the Kansas City (Missouri) metropolitan area, BEI grantee Kansas City Teacher Residency (KCTR) also provides residents with a range of financial support, including emergency funds. KCTR supports individuals who have a bachelor’s degree to become certified teachers and teach in Title I schools. The program provides residents with a stipend, AmeriCorps benefits, support for access to federal student assistance including TEACH grants, health insurance, textbooks for residency coursework, university benefits,

---

<sup>23</sup> For more on the state of Minnesota’s Q Comp/Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System, visit <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/edev/qc/>



scholarships, and emergency funds. These financial supports have helped KCTR achieve a higher percentage of Black teacher residents completing their program and earning their teacher certification than any other teacher preparation program in Missouri.

In particular, the opportunity to access emergency funds – supported by BEI – has been essential for many of KCTR’s candidates. Emergency or support funds are a means to supplement the stipend which is essential but does not always provide a living wage. A need for emergency funds arises when a resident’s inability to obtain those funds could prevent them from persisting in the program. According to KCTR, examples include:

- A death in the family requiring travel;
- Eviction from housing;
- Medical expenses;
- Loss of child care;
- Transportation; and
- Certification costs.

In 2021-2022, KCTR provided residents with more than \$23,000 in emergency funds, which demonstrates the need for this kind of financial support. More recently, KCTR has decided to transition the name from “emergency funds” to “support funds” to encourage more teacher residents to access the support. The KCTR team has also expanded Support Funds to include a Wellness Fund that provides funding for mental health services.

Another unique approach to financial accessibility can be found at BEI grantee Clarkson University in New York, which offers a Master of Arts in Teaching and partners with a number of school districts to offer a full-year teaching residency. Clarkson has partnered with an external financial institution to offer an income share agreement (ISA), in which “the student is provided money upfront for their education in exchange for a percentage of their future income to be paid to the entity over a specified time.”<sup>24</sup>

Clarkson realized that ISAs were a viable option for their teacher residents because graduate placement, salaries, and repayment are predictable. The program invested an initial \$200,000 to support loan scholarships of up to \$12,000 per teacher resident with an eight-year repayment plan. Upon being hired, the graduate pays up to 2.5% of their salary monthly. Similar to other private financial instruments, the program’s ISA terms and

---

<sup>24</sup> National Association of College and University Business Officers. (2022, March 7). *Income Share Agreements are Private Education Loans*, ED Announces. Retrieved at: <https://www.nacubo.org/News/2022/3/Income-Share-Agreements-are-Private-Education-Loans-ED-Announces>

conditions have certain student protections in place including grace periods, additional deferment options, and a payment freeze if alumni salary falls below \$30,000 a year.

Program officials note that it is important to clearly communicate to donors their return on investment, and to clearly communicate to candidates about the logistics and obligations of the ISA. Clarkson candidates like the idea of “paying it forward” with their funds recycled as graduates pay them back, which allows Clarkson to support future Black candidates.

**Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 1**

<p><b>Teacher preparation programs can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider ways of providing scholarships or otherwise lowering tuition, such as accessing AmeriCorps or workforce development/apprenticeship funds for teacher candidates. For example, in many teacher residency programs, such as the Kansas City Teacher Residency program, residents are eligible for AmeriCorps funds.</li> <li>▪ Connect candidates with opportunities to offset the cost of teacher education, particularly those that are not loan-based.</li> <li>▪ Formalize partnerships with school districts in which the district provides their teacher candidates with direct financial support, such as a stipend and/or flexible-use funds for emergency or support purposes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>School districts can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Allocate district funds toward teacher residencies as a way of developing teacher candidates who will eventually teach in the district and leverage their clinical practice time to fill other needs. For example, schools and districts could pay teacher education candidates to serve in existing classroom roles (e.g., instructional assistant, paraprofessional) while they work side-by-side with a mentor teacher who acts as the teacher of record.</li> </ul>
<p><b>States can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide state funding to develop residency programs and to pay for clinical experiences. California<sup>25</sup>, Mississippi<sup>26</sup>, and New Mexico<sup>27</sup> have all allocated state funding in this way, and Washington State is working to fund and create a statewide full-year teacher residency</li> </ul>

<sup>25</sup> For more on California’s program, visit <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/grant-funded-programs/teacher-residency-grant-program>

<sup>26</sup> For more on Mississippi’s program, visit <https://www.mdek12.org/OTL/MTR>

<sup>27</sup> House Bill 13 (2022). Teacher Residency Changes. New Mexico Regular Session. <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Legislation/Legislation?Chamber=H&LegType=B&LegNo=13&year=22>

	<p>program.<sup>28</sup> In addition, Colorado<sup>29</sup> used federal American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds to support paid student teaching and clinical experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Incentivize school districts to offset the cost of preparation for teacher residencies by creating legislation and/or providing funds that require school districts to contribute financially. For example, in its 2020 budget, the state of Virginia appropriated funds for teacher residency partnerships between teacher preparation programs and several large school districts in the state and required that “partner school divisions shall provide at least one-third of the cost of each program.”<sup>30</sup></li></ul>
--	--



**Recommendation 2. Prioritize recruitment strategies that focus on Black educators.**

Across the country, enrollees at teacher preparation programs are nearly 64% white, while public school students are 47% white. Several states have a significant diversity gap between prospective teachers and students, and many of the nation’s largest and most prominent programs enroll more than 90% white candidates.<sup>31</sup> One of root causes for this disproportionality is that teacher preparation programs have not traditionally prioritized recruiting educators of color.

There have been some concerted efforts to improve the recruitment of people of color into the teaching profession.<sup>32</sup> For example, researchers have begun to study how teacher preparation programs might diversify the workforce by developing a high-quality, equity-focused recruitment approach that responds to the interests and motivations of teacher candidates of color.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2022). *Sustaining a Strong Educator Workforce Through Teacher Residencies: 2023–25 Biennial Operating Budget Decision Package*. Retrieved at: <https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/communications/2022docs/P7-Sustaining-a-Strong-Educator-Workforce-Through-Teacher-Residencies.pdf>

<sup>29</sup>House Bill 22-1220 (2022). Removing Barriers to Educator Preparation. Colorado Regular Session. <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb22-1220>

<sup>30</sup> Virginia Acts of Assembly - Chapter 1289 (2020). § 1-49. Virginia Department of Education, Central Office Operations (201). <https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/get/budget/4186/HB30/>

<sup>31</sup> TNTP. (2020). A Broken Pipeline: Teacher Preparation’s Diversity Problem. Retrieved from: <https://tntp.org/publications/view/a-broken-pipeline>

<sup>32</sup> Albert Shanker Institute, 2015; Griffin, A., & Tackie, H. (2016). *Through our eyes: Perspectives and reflections from Black teachers*. Education Trust. Retrieved at: <https://edtrust.org/resource/through-our-eyes/>

<sup>33</sup> Kappan Magazine. (2021). Building a more ethnoracially diverse teaching force: New directions in research, policy, and practice. Retrieved at: [https://pdkmembers.org/members\\_online/publications/archive/pdf/PDK\\_2021\\_SpecialIssue/PDK\\_SpecialIssue\\_2021\\_Completelssue.pdf](https://pdkmembers.org/members_online/publications/archive/pdf/PDK_2021_SpecialIssue/PDK_SpecialIssue_2021_Completelssue.pdf)

Teacher preparation pathways focused on increasing diversity in the profession, such as teacher residency programs, have done the most to reshape the approach to recruiting candidates of color and to dismantle the barriers these candidates traditionally confront in the process. For example, in a 2020 report, NCTR identified the following strategies in use by teacher residency programs that could be adopted by traditional teacher preparation programs:

- Recruiting *for* and *from* a particular community.
- Employing culturally responsive strategies to recruit candidates.
- Designing programs intentionally around diversity, equity, and inclusion.<sup>34</sup>

**Recruitment cannot be addressed in isolation from preparation and retention. Discerning candidates will question or reject recruitment efforts that focus only on getting them into programs without also focusing on how to support and retain them.**

### ***Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples***

BEI-supported teacher residencies have focused on recruiting Black educators into their programs and consistently recruit a larger proportion of Black residents than other teacher residencies in the NCTR network. These outcomes are the result of setting ambitious, focused recruitment goals and employing targeted recruitment strategies, such as communicating about financial benefits during enrollment (see *Recommendation 1, above*) and partnering with community-based organizations, schools, and colleges to reach Black teacher candidates.

For example, BEI grantee Clarkson University used BEI funds to help develop a targeted recruitment initiative called Jumpstart. Starting in spring 2022, the program offered three \$10,000 scholarships to new Black teacher candidates who would start in the summer. To identify candidates, Clarkson hired a Black recruiter who immediately began reaching

---

<sup>34</sup> Azar, T., Hines, E., & Scheib, C. (2020). Teacher residencies as a vehicle to recruit teachers of color. *National Center for Teacher Residencies*. Retrieved at: <https://nctrresidencies.org/resource/teacher-residencies-as-a-vehicle-to-recruit-teachers-of-color>

out to local school human resource directors, assistant superintendents, and principals to find candidates from their existing staff pool who would be interested in an intensive six-week summer graduate program. The candidates all had bachelor's degrees and had been substitute teachers, teaching assistants (TAs), and/or paraprofessionals within the school system for years. Along with BEI-provided scholarship funding and funding from the New York State Teacher Opportunity Corp, the scholarship cut candidates' out-of-pocket tuition costs down to approximately \$9,000.

In Virginia, BEI grantee RTR is a teacher residency program partnership between Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and the Richmond, Petersburg, Chesterfield, and Henrico school districts. The Minority Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Equity Center (MERREC) at VCU has a dedicated recruitment staff member who is increasing the number of Black teacher residency candidates; the staff member is a Black Virginian and a graduate of a historically Black college and university (HBCU) chosen for their potential to create authentic connections due to shared lived experiences and cultural understanding. The recruiter and their support team visit local high schools to encourage Black students to begin considering education as a major, and partner with VCU's strategic engagement office so that RTR and MERREC staff are represented at all School of Education events to talk about their work. In taking this approach, RTR, with the support of MERREC, has abandoned the one-size-fits-all approach to recruitment for a strategy that responds to the diversity and complexity of the communities RTR serves.

RTR and MERREC couple this outreach with a strong value proposition: waived tuition, culturally-centered support from MERREC, programming specifically for Black residents that has been created in partnership with local Black leaders, strong district support through induction, and access to emergency funds. The MERREC team has also created tools that communicate clearly and transparently to Black candidates about what the program has to offer to new recruits, and ensures that what is offered attends to these candidates' specific needs and interests. This approach shows Black candidates how desirable they are as teacher candidates and how valuable it would be to retain them.

**Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 2**

<p><b>Teacher preparation programs can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Employ high-touch recruitment strategies, such as calling candidates directly to encourage them to apply and following up to help them meet deadlines.<sup>35</sup></li> <li>▪ Strengthen communication during the recruitment process to help candidates understand the social justice or antiracist orientations of programs as well as the community being served.<sup>36</sup></li> <li>▪ Include diverse perspectives during the recruitment cycle, such as organizing alumni panels of Black educators sharing their experiences of the program and as teachers.<sup>37</sup></li> <li>▪ Fund and staff positions in teacher preparation programs that focus solely on the recruitment of candidates of color, filled by staff of color.</li> <li>▪ Leverage partnerships, particularly with school districts, that aim to diversify the workforce by supporting enrollment and ongoing support and development of teacher candidates of color.</li> </ul>
<p><b>School districts can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In partnership with teacher preparation programs, develop “grow-your-own” recruitment strategies that focus on diversifying the workforce or increasing the number of educators of color. To ensure the success and sustainability of identified recruitment strategies, the partnership should also focus on ongoing support and retention of candidates.</li> <li>▪ Focus human resources (HR) teacher recruitment efforts on identifying potential candidates of color and on building a pool of potential candidates from existing school and local community members (i.e. paraprofessionals, parents, local partner staff, etc.) so that the workforce more closely parallels the student body.</li> </ul>
<p><b>States can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Require as part of the program approval process that teacher preparation programs set equity-focused recruitment goals. In its state teacher diversity and equity database, The Education Trust suggests that states “adopt rigorous program approval standards to compel teacher preparation programs to recruit and graduate candidates of color.”<sup>38</sup> Currently, just 14 states meet this criterion.</li> </ul>

<sup>35</sup> Azar, T. et al, 2020; Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022

<sup>36</sup> Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022

<sup>37</sup> Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022

<sup>38</sup> The Education Trust. (2022). *Is Your State Prioritizing Teacher Diversity & Equity?* Retrieved at: <https://edtrust.org/educator-diversity/#BP>



- Fund and support teacher preparation programs at HBCUs and minority-serving institutions (MSIs), which currently account for 40% of all education degrees awarded to teachers of color.<sup>39</sup>



### **Recommendation 3. Ensure that teacher preparation programs are culturally and linguistically sustaining for Black educators.**

Many teacher preparation candidates are drawn to the teaching profession to practice community-minded, equity-focused, and transformative teaching and learning in classrooms. Research suggests that these teaching practices can lead to improved student learning and stronger outcomes.<sup>40</sup> Research also suggests that teacher education candidates of color crave deeper critical learning experiences; such as classes that address pressing social and political controversies in public schooling, that examine racial literacy and racial consciousness, and that provide opportunities to study and decenter the role of whiteness in the K-12 curriculum.<sup>41</sup> However, coursework in most teacher preparation programs is not typically inclusive of the perspectives and expertise of educators of color and does not often prioritize preparing teachers to lead and support culturally responsive and inclusive classrooms or teach effectively in local and state sociopolitical contexts that are not supportive of these practices.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Gasman, M., Castro Samayoa, A., & Ginsberg, A. (2016). A Rich Source for Teachers of Color and Learning: Minority Serving Institutions. *Penn Center for Minority Serving Institutions*. Retrieved at: [https://cmsi.gse.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/MSI\\_KelloggReportR5.pdf](https://cmsi.gse.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/MSI_KelloggReportR5.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> Muñiz, J. (2019, September 23). 5 Ways Culturally Responsive Teaching Benefits Learners. *New America*. Retrieved at: <https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/5-ways-culturally-responsive-teaching-benefits-learners/>

<sup>41</sup> Haddix, M., & Brown, K. W. (2022). Students of Color as Architects of Future Designs for Teacher Education and Research. In *Handbook of Research on Teachers of Color and Indigenous Teachers*; Kappan Magazine, 2021

<sup>42</sup> Carter Andrews et al., 2019; Kappan Magazine, 2021; Marchitello, M., & Trinidad, J. (2019). Preparing Teachers for Diverse Schools: Lessons from Minority Serving Institutions. *Bellwether Education Partners*. Retrieved at: [https://bellwethereducation.org/sites/default/files/Preparing%20Teachers%20for%20Diverse%20Schools\\_Bellwether.pdf](https://bellwethereducation.org/sites/default/files/Preparing%20Teachers%20for%20Diverse%20Schools_Bellwether.pdf)

White, A. L. (2022). The State of Education Censorship in Institutions of Higher Ed and Implications for the Field. *American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education*. Retrieved at: [https://aacte.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/AACTE-Censorship-Report\\_10.25\\_final.pdf](https://aacte.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/AACTE-Censorship-Report_10.25_final.pdf)

**When teacher preparation programs do not adequately address these issues, they create conditions that alienate and burden teachers of color, making Black educators more likely to grow disengaged with teaching and increasing the likelihood that they will exit the program or the profession.<sup>43</sup>**

### ***Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples***

Teacher residencies, particularly those participating in the BEI, ensure that coursework and the clinical experience is culturally sustaining and affirming for teacher residents and for the students those teacher residents will eventually serve. Through an NCTR community of practice, a group of BEI grantee programs explored the question, “How can residencies build an awareness of national and local sociopolitical context into coursework, and how does that impact Black residents specifically?” The group generated the following principles that their programs and other teacher residencies could use:

- Teacher residencies should include coursework related to teacher resident identity;
- Familiarity with the national and local sociopolitical context of teaching benefits teacher residents who will enter classrooms and can serve as agents of change; and
- The perspectives of teacher residents of color, especially Black teacher residents, should inform efforts to address anti-Black racism and its impact on teaching and Black teachers.

---

<sup>43</sup> Gobir, N. (2021, February 8). Strategies for Retaining Teachers of Color and Making Schools More Equitable. *KQED*. Retrieved at: <https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/57280/strategies-for-retaining-teachers-of-color-and-making-schools-more-equitable>



*Jazmine Orozco is a teacher resident at Nashville Teacher Residency. This picture was taken at Cameron Middle School.*

BEI grantee Nashville Teacher Residency (NTR) is working to incorporate these principles into their program. NTR recruits, develops, and licenses teacher candidates from diverse backgrounds and experiences to become highly-effective middle and high school English, math, and science teachers. NTR has prioritized culturally responsive teaching in teacher resident coursework with a course sequence called “Culturally Sustaining Methods (pedagogy)”. The course includes a distillation of Zaretta Hammond’s Ready for

Rigor Framework,<sup>44</sup> and includes topics such as sociocultural consciousness; implicit bias and stereotype training; and ensuring access to rigorous and inclusive high-quality instructional materials (HQIM). Residents are assessed on their ability to implement the equitable practices in the classroom.

NTR’s program leaders say it is critically important that this culturally responsive pedagogical instruction is thoroughly integrated into methods course content, rather than an “aside” or a “special course.” Realizing that the residency year experience extends beyond coursework, NTR worked with the community they serve as an integral part of this culturally responsive work; proactively communicating about their mission and vision when onboarding school partners; interviewing school leaders and partners to confirm alignment on the meaning of equity; and identifying supports already in place at school sites. Mentor teachers are also trained on how to use culturally sustaining methods. Additionally, NTR ensures that diverse voices and perspectives are a part of their leadership team, and has invested time in organizational learning around antiracist practices, equity, and culturally responsive teaching and leading pedagogy. NTR also has a Director of Equity and Program, and plans to further invest in additional dedicated staff

---

<sup>44</sup> Hammond, Z. (2018). Culturally Responsive Teaching Puts Rigor at the Center: Q&A with Zaretta Hammond. *Learning Professional*, 39(5), 40-43. Retrieved at: <https://learningforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/culturally-responsive-teaching-puts-rigor-at-the-center.pdf>

to focus on equity. Finally, NTR partners with groups such as [The Education Trust in Tennessee](#) and [Tennessee Coalition for Truth in Classrooms](#), and [Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance](#) to support residents in addressing these issues in the classroom, including a class embedded in the instructional methods sequence called “Navigating the Current Political Climate,” in which residents discuss community-building with students, families, and administrators.

**Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 3**

<p><b>Teacher preparation programs can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design and support equity-focused instruction, coursework, and classrooms, independently or in partnership with community organizations.</li> <li>▪ Hire, invest in, train, support, and promote faculty, staff, and instructors of color.<sup>45</sup></li> <li>▪ Design and implement courses and field experiences that center equity and prepare culturally and linguistically sustaining teachers.<sup>46</sup> For example, California State University created the CSU Center for Transformational Teacher Preparation Programs (CSU CTEPP), which focuses on preparing culturally responsive educators.<sup>47</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>School districts can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partner with teacher preparation programs to ensure that teacher preparation coursework reflects the communities where candidates will teach.</li> <li>▪ Allow teacher leaders, mentors, and other administrators of color to serve as instructors in teacher preparation programs.</li> <li>▪ Provide professional learning opportunities for current staff and administrators to train in equity focused practices in schools to ensure that residents are learning in welcoming, safe, and racially-conscious school environments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>States can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adopt or adapt the Pathways Alliance teacher residency definition which states that, “LEAs’ priorities, student learning needs, P-12 curriculum and standards, and the communities and cultures where</li> </ul>

<sup>45</sup> Marchitello, M., & Trinidad, J., 2019

<sup>46</sup> California Department of Education. (2022). Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy. Retrieved at: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ee/culturallysustainingped.asp>

<sup>47</sup> California State University. (2021, August 12). California State University to Launch Center for Transformational Educator Preparation Programs. Retrieved at: <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/news/Pages/California-State-University-to-Launch-Center-for-Transformational-Educator-Preparation-Programs.aspx>; Kappan Magazine, 2022

	<p>residents will be teaching influence the scope and sequence of the preparation program’s residency curriculum.”<sup>48</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Require or incentivize the hiring, training, and promotion of diverse teacher preparation faculty and staff through approval of teacher preparation programs.</li><li>▪ Revisit teacher preparation program approval requirements and process to ensure coursework scope and sequence and fieldwork experiences explicitly address equity and culturally responsive teaching. For example, Pennsylvania recently released culturally-relevant and sustaining education guidelines as part of its requirements for teacher preparation programs.<sup>49</sup> The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) adopted the Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards to “help aspiring educators build the skills they need to engage students who may come from different backgrounds and cultures than them, in order to create an environment most conducive to learning.”<sup>50</sup> Minnesota’s Professional Educators Licensing and Standards Board may soon require new educators to demonstrate cultural competency in teaching in order to receive teaching certification.<sup>51</sup></li></ul>
--	--



#### **Recommendation 4. Employ affinity groups as a standard component of the teacher education experience.**

Affinity groups are collections of individuals who share a common identity characteristic, usually something that is traditionally underrepresented. Increasingly, training programs and workplaces use affinity groups as a strategy to create an affirming space that can engage participants in honest dialogue, allow them to share best practices, and help them address challenges together. Research suggests that affinity groups can facilitate the communication of needs, collaborative problem solving, and self-advocacy to meet professional and personal goals.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Pathways Alliance, Prepared To Teach, & National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2022

<sup>49</sup> Juhasz, Aubri. (2022, November 16). Pa. releases anti-racist guidelines as part of teacher-prep overhaul. *WHYY*.

Retrieved at: <https://whyy.org/articles/culturally-relevant-teacher-guidelines/>

<sup>50</sup> For more on Illinois’ standards, visit <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Culturally-Responsive-Teaching-Leading-Standards.aspx>

<sup>51</sup> Svendsen, Tim. (2022, December 6). Cultural competency may be required for new Minnesota teacher licenses and judge rules. *Minnesota News*. Retrieved at: <https://localtoday.news/mn/cultural-competency-may-be-required-for-new-minnesota-teacher-licenses-and-judge-rules-97381.html>

<sup>52</sup> Bristol, T. J., Wallace, D. J., Manchanda, S., & Rodriguez, A. (2020). Supporting Black male preservice teachers: Evidence from an alternative teacher certification program. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 95(5), 484-497. Retrieved at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0161956X.2020.1828690?journalCode=hpje20>; Gobir, N., 2021

Affinity groups can be used in teacher preparation programs to allow Black educators to collaboratively address issues that negatively impact them, and to empower them to generate solutions.<sup>53</sup> This is especially important in predominantly white spaces, creating a more affirming environment for Black educators to share practices and experiences.<sup>54</sup> White affinity groups can also help create a more racially conscious culture in programs by increasing collective awareness, preventing peer-to-peer microaggressions, and empowering white residents to advocate for equitable practices.

### ***Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples***

Teacher preparation programs should use affinity groups in combination with other strategies to help create supportive environments for aspiring teachers of color that promote educator support, development, and retention. The CRPL study of the BEI teacher residency programs found that Black affinity groups can provide a safe space for residents to reflect on their experiences together in the program and build community. Residents and administrators in the study noted that when structured appropriately, affinity groups provided a space for residents to build community and to create spaces for healing as well as learning. The most successful affinity groups: allowed residents to set the agenda and direction for the group with resources provided by residency staff; paired Black graduates with Black teacher residents within the affinity group; compensated alumni for leading affinity group sessions; created time during coursework for affinity groups; and used affinity groups as a learning community to learn more about topics of interest such as career pathways.<sup>55</sup>

For example, the Teacher in Residence program at BEI grantee Old Dominion University (ODU) in Virginia prepares teachers for Norfolk, Newport News, and Virginia Beach City Public Schools in the areas of secondary education/mathematics, science, and special education. This school year, 92% of teacher residents in the program identify as a person of color. The ODU program began using affinity groups in 2020, including one for students and alumni of color and one for white students and alumni, to create a safe space for teacher residents to unpack what is going on in communities and to make deeper connections with one another. The groups were led by dedicated facilitators, and met monthly in the evening, with each session centered on a specific text, such as

---

<sup>53</sup> Gobir, N., 2021; Kappan Magazine, 2021; Mason, S., Cole-Malott, D., Teoh, M., Ravenell, A., El-Mekki, S., Seaton, K., & Woldeyohannes, M. (2021). To be who we are: Black teachers on creating affirming school cultures. Teach Plus. Retrieved at: <https://teachplus.org/teachplus-cbed-tobewhoweare/>

<sup>54</sup> Mason, S., et al., 2021

<sup>55</sup> Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022



Bettina Love’s work<sup>56</sup> and Ibram X. Kendi’s book *How to Be an Antiracist*. Program leaders consistently share information about the affinity groups during the recruitment process so that prospective candidates know this opportunity exists for their own reflection, self-care, and connection.

In 2022, the text and focus of the affinity groups at ODU shifted slightly in response to the anti-CRT (known as critical race theory) movement (which is strong in the [state of Virginia](#)), using Derrick Bell’s work to inform teacher residents of color about CRT and focusing the white affinity group on issues related to perpetuating racial harm.<sup>57</sup>

The RTR program also uses affinity groups. In their first year as a BEI grantee, RTR leaders conducted a survey to determine graduate and resident interest in affinity groups then created four affinity groups that center race, gender, sexual identities, and other social identities and associated issues selected by teacher residents. The current affinity groups explored topics ranging from intersectional experiences of Black women doctoral candidates to the gendered language in books being used in resident classrooms.

These affinity groups were initiated and organized by MERREC at VCU, but teacher residents were responsible for leading and shaping the groups. The MERREC staff offered support and funding for professional learning, books, and guest speakers. Empowering while supporting teacher residents and graduates is key for the VCU/RTR team, so it was important to turn over decision-making and leading power to teacher residents and graduates, if they had the desire and capacity to manage it.

**Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 4**

<b>Teacher preparation programs can...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Develop and fund affinity groups as a routine component of teacher preparation.</li><li>▪ Embed affinity groups into partnership agreements with school districts.</li><li>▪ Embed affinity group opportunities into regular schedules and coursework.</li><li>▪ Draw on partnerships and experts to help design and implement high-quality affinity groups that are responsive to participants’ needs.</li></ul>
--	---

---

<sup>56</sup> For more on Bettina Love, visit <https://bettinalove.com>

<sup>57</sup> Bell, D. (1992). *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism*. Basic Books, New York.

<b>School districts can...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Create time/space, funding, and support for affinity groups for the teacher education candidates training in local schools.</li><li>▪ Extend and deepen the work of affinity groups that take place through teacher education programs by continuing the practice during induction and beyond.</li></ul>
<b>States can...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Require or incentivize affinity groups as part of teacher residency partnerships between school districts and educator preparation programs.</li><li>▪ Create policies that include affinity groups as a required component of teacher residency programs.</li></ul>



**Recommendation 5. Invest in and support mentors who can cultivate prospective Black educators.**

One of the most powerful elements of the teacher residency model is the role of the mentor teacher. Mentor teachers are not only the teachers of record in residents’ primary clinical placements, they are “skilled P-12 teachers who can articulate their instructional practices and decisions and collaborate with, observe, evaluate, and coach teacher residents, monitoring teacher resident progress and providing strategic feedback for growth and development.”<sup>58</sup> And yet, most teacher education candidates do not have access to a mentor teacher that has been strategically recruited, matched, and trained to support them in a deep way during the teacher training process.

The mentoring experience is not only beneficial for the teacher resident but also for the mentor teacher. Using data from three residency programs and their respective school district partners employing the mentor model advocated by NCTR, Glassfrog Solutions researchers found that hosting a teacher resident in the classroom is positively associated with a higher teacher effectiveness score for the host teacher.<sup>59</sup> Research shows that Black educators are looking for mentors who can help guide them and provide a space to delve into the issues they face in their classrooms,<sup>60</sup> especially when

---

<sup>58</sup> Pathways Alliance, Prepared To Teach, & National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2022

<sup>59</sup> Azar, T., Casciano, R., & Puma, J. (2020). Impact of resident-mentor pairs on teacher effectiveness. National Center for Teacher Residencies. Retrieved at: <https://nctrresidencies.org/resource/impact-of-resident-mentor-pairs-on-teacher-effectiveness>

<sup>60</sup> Bristol, T.J. (2015). Male Teachers of Color take a lesson from each other. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 97 (2), 36–41. Retrieved at: <https://kappanonline.org/male-teachers-color-lesson-from-each-other-bristol/>; Mason, S., et al., 2021

those mentors have similar lived experiences. In a study using data from NCTR’s stakeholder surveys, researchers found that when teacher residents of color share a racial or ethnic identity with their mentor teacher, they are reported to be better prepared by their mentor, and they are more satisfied with their overall preparation experience.<sup>61</sup>

### **Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples**

CPRL’s study of BEI programs suggests that mentors play a strong role in the development and support of Black educators. The mentoring relationship is viewed as a key factor in the effectiveness of their preparation.<sup>62</sup>

One BEI grantee that has placed a significant emphasis on the mentor role is the CREATE Teacher Residency program, a partnership between Georgia State University’s College of Education and Human Development and Atlanta Public Schools (APS). CREATE has developed many new teachers of color for the city’s schools and 96% of Black educators who are prepared through the CREATE program remain teaching in the school district. Program leaders attribute some of the CREATE program’s success to the emphasis they place on mentoring that focuses on cultivating an anti-racist mindset. Teacher residents are supported by three kinds of mentors:<sup>63</sup>

- **Cooperating teachers** are experienced APS teachers who are the teachers of record in the classrooms where teacher residents are engaged in their clinical experience during the first year of the program. Cooperating teachers make sure that teacher residents are given time in the classroom to practice and reflect. CREATE provides 35 hours of professional learning for cooperating teachers that focuses on coaching around skill, reflection, and resiliency, and fosters their ability to think critically about their own practice and communicate those practices to the teacher resident. Cooperating teachers also engage in regular coaching calls with CREATE program staff and the network of other cooperating teachers.

---

<sup>61</sup> Levay, K., Scheib, C., & Grossman, T. (2022). Effects of Racial and Ethnic Matching of Teacher Candidates of Color With Mentors. In *Handbook of Research on the Educator Continuum and Development of Teachers*, 9-119). IGI Global. Retrieved at: <https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/effects-of-racial-and-ethnic-matching-of-teacher-candidates-of-color-with-mentors/307281>

<sup>62</sup> Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022

<sup>63</sup> Cooperating teachers in the CREATE program are often referred to as mentors in the teacher residency model. School-based and instructional mentoring in the CREATE program are opportunities for teacher residents to receive mentoring that are above and beyond the mentoring that is provided in most teacher residency programs (see “*What is a Teacher Residency?*” sidebar). Residents are also supported by university supervisor coaches that are trained by CREATE, but these coaches are not considered to be a “mentor” because they evaluate the residents. Nevertheless, university supervisor coaches are part of the support system charged with developing residents’ skill sets aligned with the CREATE mission and vision.

- **School-based mentors** support resident educators during the second and third years of the program. School-based mentors are experienced educators that support teacher residents around skills and competencies related to resilience, well-being, and balancing work and personal life. School-based mentors receive 25 hours of professional learning from CREATE but are not fully released from their regular full-time position to serve as a mentor.
- **Instructional mentors** conduct observation cycles, work with small groups of educators to facilitate monthly professional learning events, and mentor and model lessons. Instructional mentors are fully released from their other work to serve as mentors and move from school to school to support teacher residents to become instructionally sound.

All three types of mentors receive financial support from the CREATE program for their time and expertise, including stipends (for cooperating teachers and school-based mentors) and salaried pay (for instructional mentors) – support that increases as they engage in further professional learning. This financial support is funded by federal grants and local and national philanthropic organizations. Although the CREATE program has been successful in attracting and developing mentors, program administrators say that it has been a challenge to recruit Black male teachers as mentors. This year, 69% of the program’s cooperating teachers identify as Black but only three of them are male, and 83% of school-based mentors identify as Black yet only two of them are male.

**Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 5**

<p><b>Teacher preparation programs can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Develop partnerships with school districts that prioritize giving teacher candidates access to high-quality mentoring that leverage local or state mentoring programs or mentoring roles.</li><li>▪ Allow high-performing mentor teachers from partnering school districts to serve as course instructors.</li><li>▪ Provide opportunities for partnering school and district mentors to access learning opportunities provided by the teacher preparation program.</li><li>▪ Develop with partner school districts and state leaders a shared framework for what it means to be a high-quality and culturally responsive and sustaining mentor.<sup>64</sup></li><li>▪ Recruit, select, and pair mentors with teacher candidates to ensure that mentors are experienced; effective in the classroom; can</li></ul>
---	---

---

<sup>64</sup> Kappan Magazine, 2021

	<p>articulate their practice; are continuous learners; and are supportive, inclusive, and culturally responsive and sustaining.<sup>65</sup></p>
<p><b>School districts can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide professional learning and support for mentors to work effectively with teacher candidates of color. For example, <a href="#">Edifying Teachers</a> is an organization that aims to build a national network of trained mentors to support new teachers of color.</li> <li>▪ Revisit school and district practices that focus on the selection, development, and support of teacher mentors and teacher leaders to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> <li>▪ Develop with partner teacher preparation programs and state leaders a shared framework for what it means to be a high-quality and culturally responsive and sustaining mentor.<sup>66</sup></li> <li>▪ Encourage district mentors to participate in professional learning offered by educator preparation programs and other organizations.</li> <li>▪ Use district policy and funding to compensate mentors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>States can...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fund stipends for mentors who work with teacher candidates. For example, New Mexico’s state teacher residency law, H.B. 13, calls for a stipend of no less than \$2,000 per year for mentors working with teacher residents.<sup>67</sup></li> <li>▪ Adopt or adapt the mentor component of the Pathways Alliance definition of teacher residency, which includes language about how mentors are recruited, selected, and provided with ongoing support, as well as language about how mentors work with teacher candidates.<sup>68</sup></li> <li>▪ Adjust accreditation or program approval policy to allow high-performing mentor teachers to serve as course instructors.</li> <li>▪ Develop with school districts and teacher preparation programs a shared framework for what it means to be a high-quality and culturally responsive and sustaining mentor.<sup>69</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>65</sup> Pathways Alliance, Prepared To Teach, & National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2022; Azar, T., et al, 2020

<sup>66</sup> Kappan Magazine, 2021

<sup>67</sup> House Bill 13 (2022). Teacher Residency Changes. New Mexico Regular Session. <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Legislation/Legislation?Chamber=H&LegType=B&LegNo=13&year=22>

<sup>68</sup> Pathways Alliance, Prepared To Teach, & National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2022

<sup>69</sup> Kappan Magazine, 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Review existing policies around mentor requirements and ensure the removal of unnecessary barriers to mentor eligibility, with input from stakeholders such as educator preparation programs and school districts.</li><li>▪ Require state mentoring programs to be available for teacher education and teacher residency candidates.</li><li>▪ Ensure that the mentoring experiences of teacher education and teacher residency candidates are aligned with the mentoring approach and support provided to in-service candidates. For example, the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) recently recommended, <i>“Align the pre-service mentoring work done through a statewide paid teacher residency model with OSPI Standards for Beginning Educator Induction and Beginning Educator Supports Team (BEST) practices to ensure that mentoring in pre-service residencies is seamlessly integrated with in-service mentoring and other induction supports.”</i><sup>70</sup></li><li>▪ Leverage state teacher leadership systems to create more opportunities for teacher leadership pathways for educators of color, which could include mentorship. According to NCTQ, 35 states have some formal policy focused on teacher leadership that could be focused on this goal.<sup>71</sup></li></ul>
--	--



**Recommendation 6. Include voices of Black educators in the development of teacher education policy.**

In their 2016 report, “Through Our Eyes: Perspectives and Reflections from Black Teachers,” EdTrust states, “Understanding the unique needs of teachers of color starts with listening to and learning from their experiences.”<sup>72</sup> Indeed, one of the truest ways to ensure meaningful policy and practice that actually improves the recruitment, preparation, and support of Black educators is to include the voices of those most affected by it – educators themselves – in the teacher education policy process. Furthermore, including current and prospective teachers of color in the policymaking process allows them to take on leadership roles and provides them with greater

<sup>70</sup> Rockholt, C., Gillon, N., & Barnes, E. (2022). Report to the Legislature: Teacher Residency Workgroup Findings. *Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction*. Retrieved at: <https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/communications/2022docs/11-22-Teacher-Residency-Workgroup-Findings.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> National Council on Teacher Quality. (2019). *NCTQ Databurst: Teacher Leadership Opportunities*. Retrieved at: [https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/NCTQ\\_Databurst\\_Teacher\\_Leadership\\_Opportunities](https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/NCTQ_Databurst_Teacher_Leadership_Opportunities)

<sup>72</sup> Griffin, A., & Tackie, H, 2016

ownership over policies that they can then help to implement in their classrooms and schools.



*Dr. Diarese George of the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance (TECA) speaks with teacher residents. This picture is courtesy of the Nashville Teacher Residency.*

### **Relevant BEI Lessons and Examples**

Several BEI grantees have embedded the voices of Black educators into the development of their programs. For example, the Nashville Teacher Residency (NTR) partners with the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance (TECA) to hear feedback directly from Black residents and graduates. TECA, a trusted third party, has been able to surface qualitative feedback from residents and novice teachers through surveys, focus groups,

fellowship, and “breaking bread” to understand the lived experiences of novice and new teachers. This led to NTR staff creating more intentional supports for addressing, mitigating, and removing barriers for residents of color at NTR in order to diversify the residency’s enrollment. Since this initial effort, NTR has implemented regular feedback loops to hear from residents including quarterly conversations in addition to surveys, which helps inform continuous improvement of their program.

Another example is the BEI grantee Kansas City Teacher Residency (KCTR), which has a Resident Advisory Council that meets regularly and shares feedback on different aspects of the program and the work. Program administrators noted that, “that way of receiving feedback...really centralizes the humanity of our people, when it's direct feedback from people who are experiencing it in person, not on a piece of paper.” In addition, inspired by the work of Chris Emden, an associate professor at Columbia University’s Teachers College, KCTR started a space for “cyphers,” a teaching practice in which the people who hold power are listeners only.

Finally, BEI grantee University at St. Thomas uses multiple paths for feedback from Black teacher residents and other residents in its three residency programs to continuously improve program design and implementation. The programs collect and examine feedback through mid-year and year-end surveys of the teacher residents, as well as a



summer survey, a targeted survey about emergency funds, one-on-one meetings between a program administrator and each resident each semester, and surveys focused on collecting information about perceptions of resident preparedness by students, graduates, and supervisors.

**Potential Action Steps for Recommendation 6**

<b>Teacher preparation programs can...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Conduct annual review and analysis of regularly gathered candidate survey data and implement necessary changes across aspects of programming (i.e. recruitment and selection, mentor supports, resident supports, etc.).</li></ul>
<b>School districts can...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Convene diverse and representative committees and advisory groups that include teacher education candidates and new teachers.</li></ul>
<b>States can...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Require or incentivize, through program approval or partnership agreements, that teacher preparation programs regularly convene diverse and representative committees and advisory groups to inform teacher education.</li><li>▪ Include the voices of Black educators in state-level teacher preparation policymaking, including at the state education agency, state boards of education, state educator standards boards, and with the state legislature.</li></ul>

**Conclusion**

This paper aims to elevate what we have learned from the teacher residency programs supported by NCTR’s Black Educator Initiative about recruiting, preparing, and supporting Black educators, and leverages those lessons to inform the work of teacher preparation programs, school districts, and state policymakers. We call on these system leaders to commit to a more equitable and inclusive workforce by taking action to increase the number of Black educators that enter the profession – and that continue making a difference for students over time.

While the recommendations and action steps in this paper focus on the *pre-service* component of developing a supply of teachers, it is also important to attend to *retention*. CPRL’s research found that the Black teacher residents in BEI grantee programs often felt a disconnect between their experiences in their teacher residency programs and the

school environments where they work.<sup>73</sup> Leaders of schools, school districts, and states must work to deeply understand why Black educators leave the profession, and use that information to articulate and commit to a teacher retention plan that sustains culturally responsive, affirming, and supportive work environments and working conditions for Black educators. Otherwise, we risk undermining or undoing efforts to recruit, develop, and support educators of color – and risk denying students the extraordinary benefit of learning from a diverse staff.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> Center for Public Research and Leadership, 2022

<sup>74</sup> El-Mekki, S. (2021). Teaching While Black: An Open Letter to School Leaders. *Educational Leadership*, 78(4), 40-44. Retrieved at: <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/teaching-while-black-an-open-letter-to-school-leaders>

